Hawai‘i Deaf History: Edwin Inn, Hawai‘i Sign Language and the Transition to American Sign Language

by Barbara Earth

Background to the Story

This paper centers on a particular man, Edwin Inn, who was a leader in the Deaf[1] community in Hawai‘i during the late 1930s to the 1950s. His time was historically significant because of the large population of immigrants living throughout the islands, before the waves of American settlers and American statehood. Edwin Inn's time was also the heyday of Hawai‘i Sign Language before American Sign Language became dominant. By studying the life and times of this Deaf leader, the paper aims to build knowledge about Hawai‘i Deaf history and the history of Hawai‘i Sign Language.

Like the majority of the islands' population, Edwin Inn was a descendant of immigrants who came to work in the sugar plantations that dominated the economy after 1850 when foreigners were first allowed to own land.[2] The American sugar barons wanted cheap labor and imported workers from China, Japan, the Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico and other places. From 1890 onward, immigrants and their descendants outnumbered native Hawaiians.[3]

The arrival of the immigrants changed the islands by adding new languages and cultures. In the plantation worker camps, a spoken Pidgin developed and evolved. Likewise, the Deaf community was changed. An indigenous Hawaiian sign language is known to have predated the arrival of the immigrants.[4] It's probable that Hawaiian Deaf people and immigrant Deaf people merged their signs in what Woodward described as the "meet and greet" model of sign language development.[5] It is also possible that Okinawan and/or Japanese signs were absorbed into the mix.[6] The resulting sign language we now call Hawai‘i Sign Language (HSL).[7]

Edwin Inn's life events contextualize the use of Hawai‘i Sign Language. Information was gleaned from historical records, an interview with Edwin's sister Lilian, interviews with Deaf elders, a key informant, and numerous emails with Edwin's hearing son, Danny Inn. Author's comments on recent use of Hawai‘i Sign Language are based on periods of observation over six years in Hawai‘i, interviews and informal discussions with Deaf elders on four islands, and study of videotaped interviews dating to 1999.[8]

Edwin Inn's Family History and Early Life

In the late 1800s, Edwin's paternal grandfather and grandmother left China to immigrate to Hawai‘i. Edwin's grandfather worked in the sugarcane fields of Kahuku Plantation. He and his wife lived in Punalu‘u in back of Kaya store. Edwin's father,

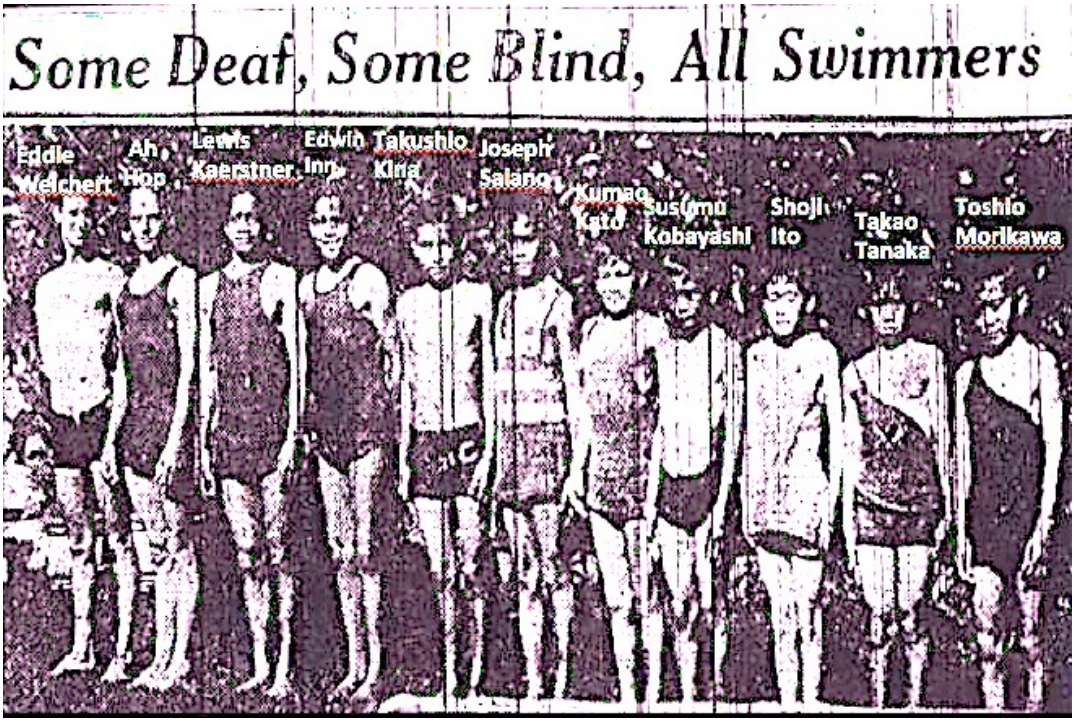
Wo Kong Inn, was born in Kahuku Hospital. Eventually the family left the sugar plantation and moved to Kaka'ako in Honolulu where they lived on Ilalo St.

Edwin's father married Edna Yuklin (Hawaiian name--Keahilaniwahinenohoikalukaweuweu In), a Hawaiian-Chinese woman originally from Maui. Edwin's father worked as a cabinetmaker at the Pearl Harbor shipyard until his retirement.[9]

Edwin Kwan Oe Inn was born December 23, 1913. He was hearing until age 6, 7 or 8 years of age when he became deaf after contracting tetanus (then called "lockjaw"). Edwin's mother was a strong believer in education. When it was determined that Edwin could not hear, he was sent to the Deaf school.[10]

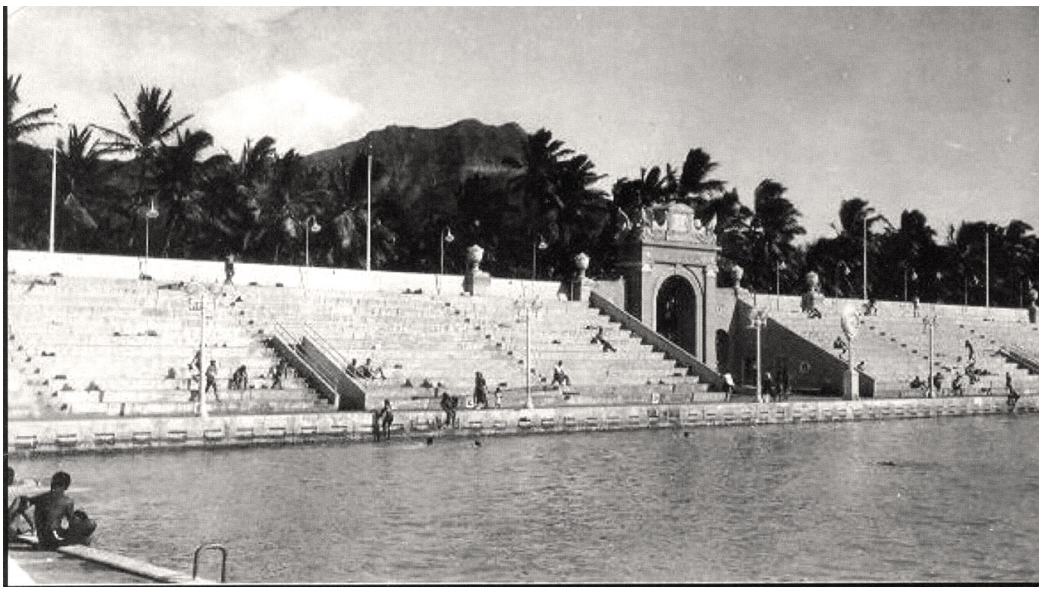
When Edwin entered school, it was already located at its current Waikīkī location.[11] Edwin's sign name is the old Hawai'i sign for "throwing up" (four fingers together with thumb up cupping the neck, then moving up and outward); we don't know the origin of his sign name, but we can surmise that it was given to him at the school during a stomach upset.

A 1928 news clipping shows Edwin with his peers at the age of 14.[12]



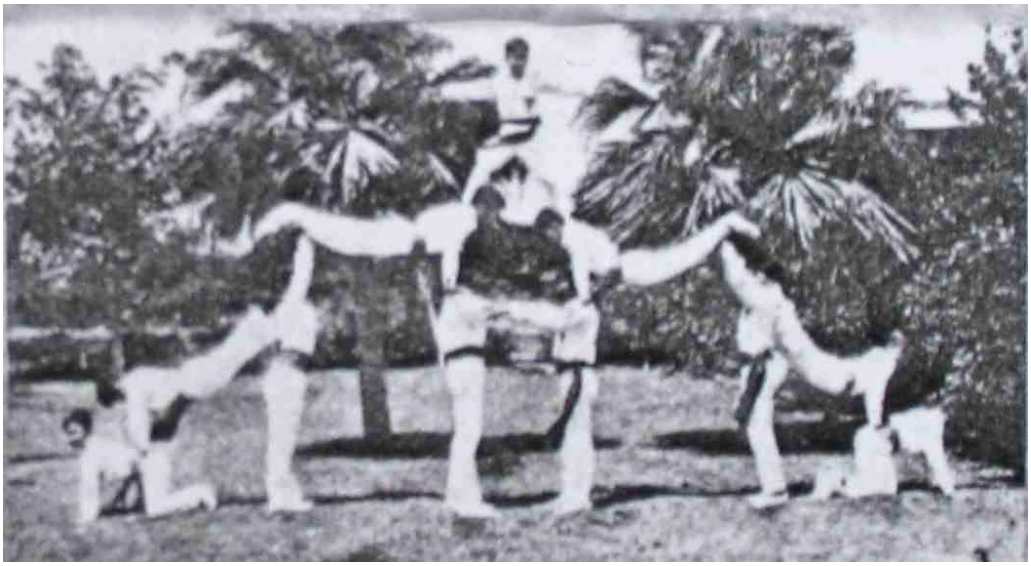
Edwin Inn fourth from left.

His sister Lilian said that Edwin was an excellent swimmer. Like other Deaf students, Edwin learned to swim at the War Memorial Natatorium in Waikīkī[13] which was convenient to the Deaf school.



War Memorial Natatorium where Deaf students learned to swim. Photo courtesy of Diamond Head School Alumni.

Edwin excelled at many sports including gymnastics; he might have been in this photo. We know that the boy at the top of the pyramid was Wataru (Ryoda) Tatsuta. His wife, Betty Tatsuta, identified Wataru to me in 2014 when she was 93.[14]



Boys learned gymnastics at the Deaf school. Photo circa 1929.[15]

Back then, the Deaf school was strictly oral and students were punished if caught signing in class. However, they signed amongst themselves during their free time. They learned how to sign from their seniors and local Deaf people working at the school. In 1923, dormitories were built and children from other islands were able to stay at the school.[16] This enabled all Deaf children to grow up together, learn sign language together, and spread Hawai‘i Sign Language uniformly across the islands.

Edwin was listed as sixteen years of age in the 1930 census that enumerated the students at the Deaf school.[17] He probably graduated in 1932 or 1933.

Competing Sign Languages: HSL and Arrival of American Sign Language (ASL)

There is little information about Edwin until the summer of 1939 when a Catholic priest named Father McCummiskey visited Honolulu from California. In June 1939, Father "Mac" met two young local Deaf men "Eddie and Alex"[18] (Edwin Inn and Alexander Santos) who rallied other young adults to begin meeting regularly. The visit by the priest was extremely meaningful to Deaf young people for two reasons. One, sign language was supported for the first time instead of being punished. Two, it was their official introduction to American Sign Language.


He Helps the Deaf . . .

1 2 3 4

SAYING IT WITH SIGNS: The Rev. John McCummiskey, who ha
worked for many years with the deaf, demonstrates the sign language
No. 1—He is showing the sign for tree. No. 2—The word is happy.
No. 3—The sign is mother. No. 4—The sign is for morning.

Priest Leads Deaf Persons
In Silent Sunday Gabfests

Source: *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, August 11, 1939, p.1.

In what must have been remarkable encounters, Deaf young people attended five weekly gatherings at the Fort Street mission where they learned "the sign language" from Father Mac, and chatted amongst themselves.[19] One or two Maryknoll Sisters were also learning "the sign language." Observations on the meetings were kept by the Sisters in a diary.[20]

For the last meeting before the priest's departure, word had gone out through Deaf networks, and a group of about twenty young Deaf people assembled. The diary noted that "many (of the Deaf) ... knew very few signs and they just beamed as

Father instructed them. They are very keen and it wasn't long before they too were able to use some of the signs."[21]

Neither the newspaper nor the Sisters seemed aware that the priest and the local Deaf used two different sign languages. Perhaps the local Deaf were "beaming" in amusement upon seeing such novel signs? Maybe they were bemused by the nuns' assumption that they didn't know any signs before the priest taught them? Whatever their thoughts, they grasped the opportunity to meet and socialize in a supportive environment and improve their signing.

It was decided that a club would be formed and that the meetings would continue on a monthly basis. The group became "Father Mac's Deaf Club," of which Edwin Inn was elected President and sign language instructor. The meetings were held in St. Augustine's parish hall near the church in Waikīkī. In 1940, the group had "23 ambitious young men and women."[22] The members were Japanese and Chinese, some Hawaiian and a few Portuguese.[23]

Father Mac's Deaf Club was founded in 1939.[24] The photo is from the 1940s, courtesy of Maryknoll Archives. (Correction: it should be Ellen, not Eileen Morales).

Two elders we spoke to in 2012 (best friends Betty Tatsuta and Grace Santos) were old enough to have been there during Edwin's time. They remembered Edwin for his leadership and sign language teaching. Even after more than seventy years, they still looked up to him and raved about him as an important influence on their lives. Edwin was popular and trustworthy. He was also Catholic,[25] thus he fit well with the goals of the church.

Back then, it was not unusual that the priest and his colleagues at St. Augustine's church approached the Hawai'i Deaf with something of a missionary attitude. (The American missionaries themselves were never involved with Hawaiian Deaf people). The nuns referred to the Deaf as "handicapped children of God" for whom "something had to be done…in the line of religion."[26] Prayers (led by Edwin) were part of the Deaf Club meetings. The nuns eagerly noted conversions.[27] Their attitude was kindly but paternalistic. It had two sides: on the one hand the nuns expressed shock at the poor circumstances in which immigrants lived; on the other hand, they were in a position to extend help.

The members of the Deaf Club signed what local elders now call "old" sign. It wasn't the *oldest* sign language, which had been the indigenous Hawaiian sign language. We don't know much about the very old Hawaiian sign language, except for a few signs described in 1821 (see endnote 4) including signs for "money," "pig," "see," and a method of counting; some of these signs have persisted to the present.

Besides Hawaiian signs, the Deaf Club knew signs that had originated in the plantation camps. These included *'ōlelo pa'i'ai* words (early Pidgin that was more Hawaiian)[28] such as *pilau* (junk); *holoholo* (going out); *lōlō* (crazy); *pūpule* (act crazy); *make* (dead); *bumbye* (later); and *pau* (finish).[29] The body language, mouth movements and body stance accompanying the spoken Pidgin words carried over to the signs used by the Deaf; some can still be seen today.[30] (HSL signs will be mentioned throughout this paper, but an HSL dictionary is forthcoming.[31])

With ASL being urged on them, there must have been discussion among the Deaf Club about which sign language they preferred. Betty Tatsuta, the last surviving member of Father Mac's Deaf Club said that the group, except for a few members, resisted ASL signs. She would not divulge who favored them.[32] There is no record of Edwin stating his thoughts on it. According to his son, "He was always open to anything and respected others' opinions … and always ready to share his version on anything... Keeping HSL? Of course. It was their Life…"[33]

While not yet keen on ASL signs, the Deaf Club immediately adopted the ASL alphabet. They eagerly practiced fingerspelling.[34] According to Betty Tatsuta, no one could spell before that time.[35] Their own sign language did not contain an alphabet, therefore it was a huge innovation to add ASL fingerspelling to their sign language. Thus they were strongly HSL but added ASL fingerspelling.[36] With fingerspelling they could for the first time spell their names. Being able to fingerspell seemed to be a symbol of education and was likely a source of pride.[37]

It must be noted that ASL signs were not completely unknown to the Deaf community in 1939. Two Deaf Club members had been to the Mainland. William Silva[38] and John Morales[39] had learned some ASL signs on trips to the Mainland for boxing meets. By 1940, three ASL signers were working at the Deaf school and were well-known by the Deaf Club.[40]

There is also evidence that at least a few ASL signs had long pre-dated the priest's visit. For example, all of the Deaf Club members used ASL signs for "green," "blue" and "yellow," and no other signs were known for those colors.[41] However HSL had signs for every other color that were completely distinct from ASL signs.

How could ASL signs have entered the local lexicon? There were numerous possible explanations after steamship travel became commonplace in the 1800s: 1) the influence of (wealthy) Deaf children sent to the Mainland for education, upon their return to Hawai'i;[42] 2) the influence of Deaf Hawaiian stowaways who went to the Mainland and came back;[43] 3) the influence of Deaf American tourists;[44] 3) the influence of early Deaf American settlers;[45] 4) the influence of a scholarly demonstration of an American Deaf student's accomplishment;[46] and 5) a (failed) attempt by a Deaf woman from California to set up a private school that would have used ASL.[47]

Regardless of the occasional ASL signs already in use whose origins in the islands remain obscure, the priest's visit marked the full-on introduction of the entire language. The Deaf Club was excited at the opportunity to meet and sign in a supportive environment and probably did not perceive it as linguistic imperialism, but it was. With media fanfare and the weight of the church, the (hearing, white) American priest set up ASL as a more prestigious sign language than the local sign language.

Introduction of ASL to the Deaf School

To encourage religious instruction among Deaf children, the priest also visited the Deaf school in 1939. He convinced the Principal, Mrs. Lacy, to allow Deaf children to receive religious instruction from the Sisters in ASL.[48] These lessons continued for many years.[49] According to undated notes of the Sisters, the children "like to learn new signs, because they enrich their sign vocabulary, which is somewhat limited." The signs were taught by explanation in signs paired with the English word written on the blackboard.[50] One informant recalled first seeing the ASL alphabet taught by a nun around 1941, and being immediately enthralled by it.[51]

Sister Bernadine and Deaf children signing ASL "grow."

Photo from the 1950s. Courtesy of Maryknoll archives.

Besides the nuns, there were several other early sources of ASL at the school. Mr. Sam Palmer, a CODA (Child of Deaf Adults) from the Mainland served as Principal from late 1939 to 1946. He supported sign language;[52] he taught ASL signs to the children.[53] Around 1940, Alden Ravn and his wife Laura, both Deaf from the Mainland, were hired as dorm parents and also served as Boy and Girl Scout troop leaders, providing further sources of ASL.[54] (The Ravns departed Hawai'i in 1942 after the bombing of Pearl Harbor[55]).

This portrait of Mr. Palmer and his years as Principal hangs in the office at the Hawai'i School for the Deaf and Blind. He taught ASL signs to Deaf children and was against the oral policy.

Alden Ravn recalled his time in Hawai'i in a 1995 interview. He said the students resisted his efforts to teach them ASL. See Riyuji Takenaka's interview for a defiant student attitude.

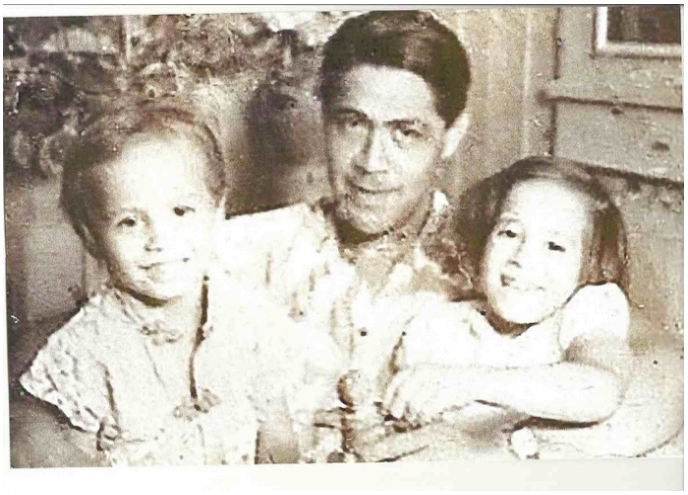
Did Edwin see what was coming? Though he kept his Hawai‘i signs, it seems Edwin suspected that ASL was destined to take hold in Hawai‘i. In a letter to a nun who taught religion at the Deaf school, he urged her to:

> …keep on studying hard and learn the method of sign languages as described in the book that Father M.C. used because *it contains several spellings and other kinds of languages than Deaf in Hawaii have*. So therefore keep on studying with the book and some day there will be a change between Hawaii's method and Father M.C.'s method.[56] (italics added)

The above passage seems to 1) graciously inform the nun that Hawai‘i used a different sign language from Father Mac's; and 2) confirm that fingerspelling was new to the Hawai‘i Deaf. Edwin foresaw that someday ASL would replace their sign language. But in 1939, it must have seemed remote. Surrounded by HSL signers in his own home and community, Edwin could hardly have imagined how quickly and irrevocably the transition would occur.

Edwin Inn's Life and Times

While he was President of the Deaf Club in the early 1940s, Edwin was married with two children. They lived as an extended family with Edwin's mother and Edwin's four younger siblings.[57] He and his hearing wife separated in 1945, and Edwin was then a single parent. He raised his children with the help of his mom, Edna.[58]



Edwin Inn as a young father circa 1942 with son Roland Dennis Kamahalo Kwan Oe Inn (Danny) (left) and daughter Beverly (right). Photo courtesy of Danny Inn.

Edwin's mother Edna (left) helped raise Edwin's two children. Photo courtesy of Lilian Kaaihue. (Lilian is on the right; center is Edward, another sibling).

They lived in Damon Tract, an area owned by Sam Damon in which all the streets were named with alphabet letters. Danny recalled the location (using Hawaiian terms for directions):

> *Makai* (toward the sea) side of Nimitz Hwy, *ewa* (leeward) side of…Ahua Road, *mauka* (toward the mountains) of the airport runway, and Diamond Head (toward Diamond Head, an extinct volcano) of the Hawaiian Airlines terminal. Damon tract had a few chicken farms…Young's *Lup Chong* (Chinese sausage) Factory was on the corner of Kaimana and K Road (we ate a lot of *Lup Chong* lol), three grocery stores... one Catholic church on T Road. (It was) kind of clannish-- Hawaiians together, groups of Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos, Portuguese, etc. and scattered mixed groups.[59]

Location of Damon Tract. It was later bought and redeveloped by a millionaire named Chin Ho to be an industrial area.[60]

The 1940 census shows that the family took in a lodger, likely to help support the household.[61] Danny recalled the family's small farm and their dependence on the outside world to keep the farm going:

> We moved to "K" Road in the 40's where I remember more vividly events … We raised Pigeons--Swiss Mondaine breed-- for food. New Zealand Rabbits bred for food also. Our flock of animals grew immensely and was a great source of food. I did the slaughtering of the animals taught by Dad and was responsible to take care of the animals… A shipping strike devastated our small farm-- no feed for animals-- no deep freezer-- a sad time, forced to slaughter a lot… so heartbreaking...[62]

This personal story illustrates the vulnerable livelihoods of many immigrant families at that time. Employment options in town for Deaf men were limited to services, small businesses and the trades. Deaf women worked as maids, kitchen or laundry workers, or dressmakers. Both men and women worked in pineapple canneries.[63]

Like many of his friends, Edwin was a carpenter. He briefly found work rebuilding on Kwajelein island (in the Marshall Islands) after World War II.[64] The following picture of Edwin may be from Kwajelein island in the late 40s or early 50s.


Edwin Inn. Image courtesy of Betty Tatsuta.

Danny was proud of his father's skill as a carpenter:

> …I met a Fujii (Fujii is a family with Deaf members) on a job in '68 or '69 and I told him I was Edwin's son and he signed to me describing my Dad as "throwing up Edwin." I said yes that's him… Proud to say they pulled their load on a construction site. They all had special fun ways of describing each other and enjoyed each other's company all the time.[65]

Danny noted the "special fun ways (the Deaf had) of describing each other." His observation referred to sign names. For sign names, HSL used signs that corresponded to physical characteristics of the person or conveyed something about the person. That way of naming people was unlike ASL which often uses initialized signs for sign names, usually the first alphabetic letter from the person's first name.

Danny remembered there "was a Silva who used to visit Dad a lot. Dad said he was a street tough guy and they both respected each other.[66] (This was William Silva from Molokaʻi; he's in the Deaf Club photo[67]). Also,

> There was a Deaf person (Filipino) who was much younger than Dad living on Lānaʻi. A lot of the Deaf would...call him "The Ear Deaf" describing him by his ears, which were by birth curled like a dolphin's… He was an exceptional ocean "free diver'' to amazing depths and a poacher of deer, antelope, mouflon, goats-- anything for meat. It was just to help subsidize him, he claimed... He was funny. He drove the game wardens crazy.[68]

The friend with dolphin ears was John K. Yanigahara.[69] His name was signed by using the thumb and index finger (both hands) to pinch the top and bottom ear lobes together. He (and his wife Flora Palau) were strong HSL signers.[70]

Photos show John as a boy and as an elder. Photos courtesy of Diamond Head School Alumni.

As with individuals, HSL had signs for the various ethnicities that were based on (stereotypical) physical characteristics (for Chinese, Japanese, African), or something that evoked the group: distinctive ethnic clothing (for Korea, Philippines, Mexico) or even dance movements associated with a country (for Scotland, Thailand, Spain). Some of these signs might now be considered racist, but there was little consciousness about racism back then. With so many different people mixed on the islands, ethnicity was extremely salient and mentioned often. Some of these signs are still known and occasionally used.

Animals also had signs that described how they looked, such as the shape of horns on goats and sheep. The sign for "pig" however, was different—it used a stabbing motion to the neck with painful facial expression to represent a pig (see endnote 4).

Slapping/spanking the thigh is HSL for "birthday." "Year" is signed by thumb and index finger clasping one's earlobe. (These signs are still known by living people, but rarely used).

Communication within Edwin's family was a mixture of signing, fingerspelling, and speaking both Pidgin and English. Danny described the method they used:

> …talking, lip reading and spelling with hands until the person speaking to you nods their head then (we) moved on to the next word or sign. We communicated to survive with Dad and that was all that mattered to us.[71]

Probably because he became Deaf after learning to speak, Edwin retained his speaking ability. "Dad knew Pidgin and he used it to talk to us … but mostly English.[72] Dad was totally deaf, but he had a sense of feeling or somehow knew of something …unusual being done by us."[73] (as if he had eyes in the back of his head)

Political activism arrived to the Hawai'i Deaf community in the early 1950s (corresponding with the arrival of Americans Hershel and Georgia Mouton—see below). It was a time of great energy when the Deaf community organized for the right to have a driver's license.[74] Edwin and his friends would gather at Edwin's house to strategize the license action. Danny recalled a funny story:

> …I knew they enjoyed the camaraderie by their laughter that I could hear from outside of the house... Dad aggressively pursued (the driver's license) and made them take an oath that they would NOT… sign with the driver while being a passenger and not mess up… Dad told me on the day (of the court appearance) that they would really plead their case for their driver's license. The members in the car …Dad in front seat as a passenger, others in the car … (Toshio) Morikawa, (Ah) Hopp, Eiji (Matsumura), (John) Morales.[75]
>
> Morales was driving.[76] As they turned onto Nimitz Highway from "K" Road in Damon Tract, he climbed the curb because he was being inattentive to his driving and watching someone sign. He immediately got a knuckle to his head from Dad…the knuckle to the head was customary in Dad's time at the school...[77]

"Knuckle to the head" is a sign still used today to mean "hard headed" or "stubborn."[78] It was also a kind of corporal punishment Edwin inflicted on Morales for doing what he had just sworn not to do.

Danny suffered from the discrimination that Edwin faced as a Chinese/Hawaiian and as a Deaf man. It was not easy for Edwin to get work. Danny recalled:

> Our class covered the Korean War and my…section (of the newspaper) (covered) the casualties of the war… it was so sad that students in our class lost their older brothers KIA or wounded… I explored other sections (of the newspaper) and especially the Want Ads … for my Dad (who) wasn't working. It used to read "Carpenters Wanted, Japanese Preferred." It used to make me angry. I had that silent resentment (toward them) being privileged by their race and Hawaiians were always …part of a joke. I loved all my Japanese friends; it wasn't their fault. We didn't have a lot of basic everyday things and lived within our means because there was no work for a good Hawaiian carpenter… Everything changed when we got to be the 50th state and it (became) illegal to run ads in the paper by…race.[79]

Even in the face of discrimination, Edwin had a strong personality, believed in himself and had self-respect. According to his son:

> He never whined or complained of discrimination… for being Hawaiian, and discrimination for being Deaf ...He was always proud to be Hawaiian and always wrote Hawaiian quotes. It would get us scrambling to look for the interpretation of what he wrote; he kind of enjoyed it. He always taught to try harder, be better, everyone is watching especially being Deaf. His pet peeve was someone calling a Deaf person "dummy." It would light him up, he would remind them that they are not ''dummies…" (He) was always ready to defend his belief even physical. (It means he would fight).

> Dad was never bitter of being Deaf… he was a Driven Person and felt anyone can be whatever they wanted to be…if they tried...I think a lot of reading and studying made him that way... and especially being taught at Diamond Head School and (being) given the opportunity to lead made him a Driven Person.[80] Perfection was a common thing with him.[81]

"Driven" is a good description of how Edwin would set his mind to something and read about it until he knew the topic very well. Edwin's younger siblings looked up to him with a sort of awe because he was so intelligent. They said that Edwin had such depth knowledge of the law through self-study that he would have been a topnotch lawyer had he not been Deaf. They were always amazed by his knowledge.[82]

Similarly, when Edwin converted to Catholicism prior to his marriage, he took it very seriously, studied hard, and was the only Deaf person on all the islands to be a member of the Holy Name Society.[83] He seems to have been quite devout; he also adhered to the church's politics.[84]

Edwin excelled in many sports: swimming, tumbling, judo, wrestling, and maybe more. But he never bragged, or if he did, only about his teammates.[85] Danny remembers that his father's strength could sometimes lead to trouble:

> He was a physically strong person and would take on…challenges in arm wrestling and would anger a lot of challengers…when he beat them…(they) would want to fight...They would say at a *luau* they "don't want no one challenging him in arm wrestling, leave him alone." Yeah right... sure enough they would, we hated it because they would want to fight when he beat them. Funny now, stressful then... lol just wanted to share that he was a Braddah!![86]

The family moved with Edna in 1956 or 57 and helped remodel her home on Hawaiian Homestead land in Waimānalo. Edwin hosted Deaf meetings in Waimānalo at his mother's house.[87] When Edna passed away in 1960, Edwin's youngest sister, Lilian, was awarded the legal ownership of the home by family vote. Edwin lived there with Lilian and her husband, Joseph "Isaac" Kaaihue, who was Deaf. Isaac was born in 1920 and attended the Deaf school during the time Edwin was there.[88] (Isaac passed on years ago and Lilian passed on about 2016).

Edwin was devoted to his *ohana* (extended family) and was an active grandfather. From 1962 or 63 to 1967 he lived with Danny and his wife Helen in Hau'ula and taught his two grandchildren to sign. Edwin would ask the children to show a sign for dog, tree, house, etc. and would be so proud of them for retaining the signs he taught them. The grandchildren knew how to communicate with him.[89]

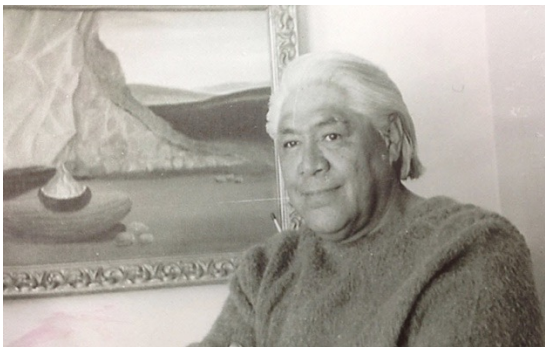
Another HSL sign used by Edwin was "grabbing the ends of your hair" to show spooky, scary, getting goosebumps, as if confronting the supernatural or having the

spirit revealed. This is what Edwin signed after reading Latter Day Saints literature left by missionaries at Danny's house sometime in the 1960s.[90]

In 1967 Edwin moved to California to help his daughter Beverly care for her two young boys.[91] As he prepared for the move, Edwin was burning junk to reduce the amount of stuff he had to leave in storage. Unfortunately, Edwin's athletic awards were accidentally burned. He had also won 4th or 5th place in a contest to design the first Mickey Mouse animated form. That award may also have been lost in the fire.[92]

Art was another aspect of Edwin's multi-faceted talent and perfectionism. He painted cultural and physical aspects of Hawai'i surrounding him. Painting under the pseudonym "Ed Garwinn" he left two paintings in the Honolulu Art Academy archives (a self-portrait and a painting of a Chinese plantation worker).[93] We have not been able to locate those paintings.

Edwin was a prolific painter during his California years. Photo shows Edwin posing with one of his paintings.



Edwin Inn. Photo courtesy of Danny Inn.

Edwin died suddenly of a heart attack January 4, 1973 as he prepared to return to Hawai'i.[94] He was staying at a Black family's home in San Francisco. The hippies loved Edwin and Edwin loved them too, according to letters he wrote to Danny. He was taking pictures and visiting friends when his heart gave out.[95]

Edwin Inn. Photo courtesy of Danny Inn.

The Passing of Hawai'i Sign Language

Edwin passed away without returning to Hawai'i,[96] thus there was no opportunity for him to meet young Deaf people and teach Hawai'i Sign Language again. HSL had been on the decline for years as the oldest HSL signers (uninfluenced by ASL) passed on. With more and more American Deaf people visiting and settling[97] in Hawai'i, American Sign Language steadily gained ground.

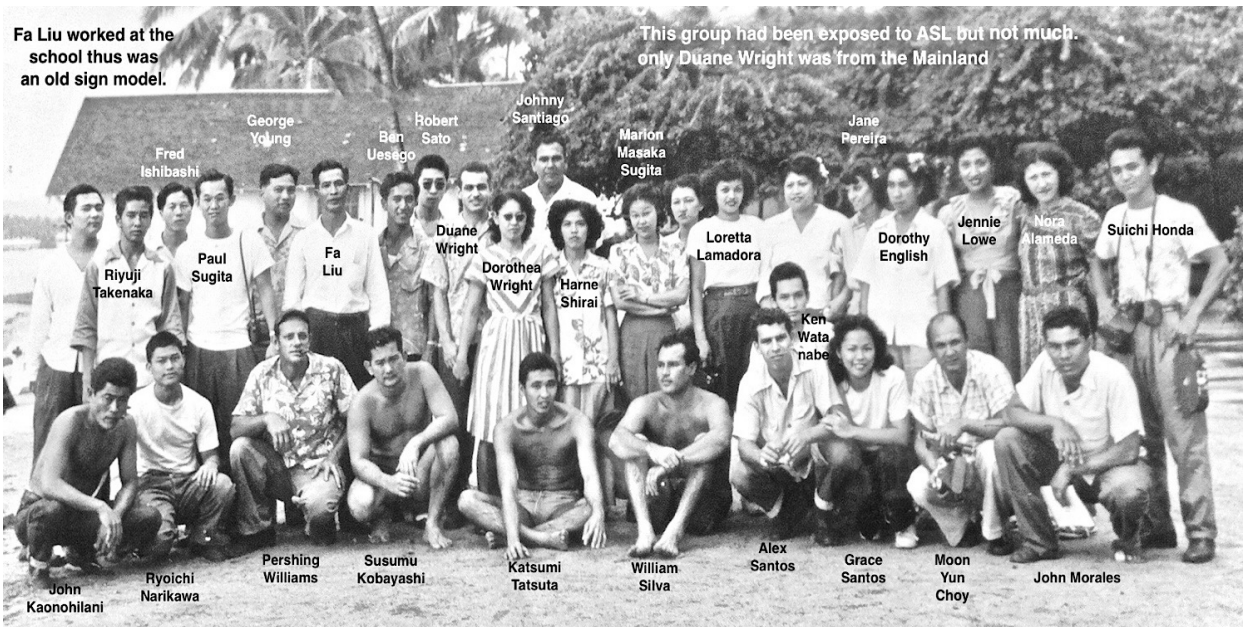
Rapid change followed the 1948 arrival of Hershel and Georgia Mouton, a Deaf couple from the Mainland who had attended Gallaudet College and became leaders in the Hawai'i Deaf community. By the 1950s, some local Deaf people thought ASL was better than their own language. Many Deaf were inspired by Georgia: she was "American, white, smart. She was a teacher. They wanted to learn ASL from her."[98] For his part, Hershel was a teacher at the Deaf school and taught ASL to numerous cohorts of Deaf children from 1948 to his retirement in 1975. Georgia and Hershel were Deaf themselves and committed to the community. People saw the benefits of their leadership and viewed ASL as the future.

Georgia Mouton (re-married name Morikawa) was a mover and shaker in the Hawai'i Deaf Community for decades.

Hershel Mouton wanted Deaf students to go to college; they would need ASL for that.

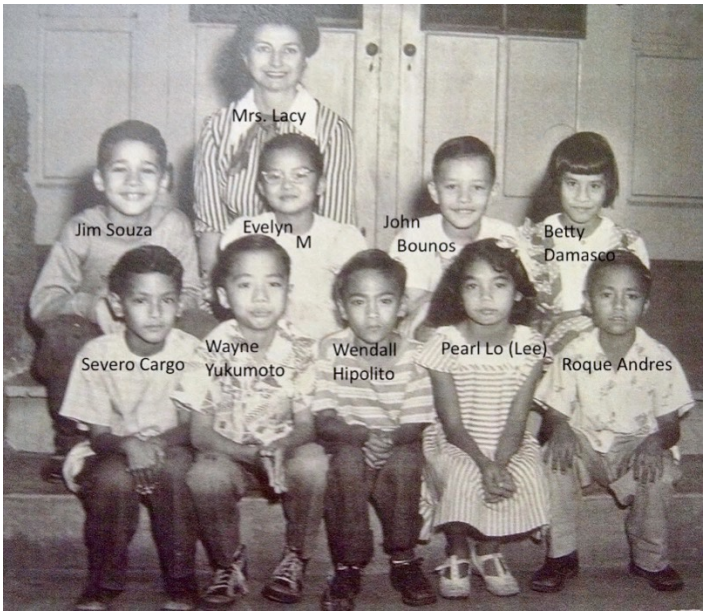
In the 1950s and beyond, Deaf American visitors were more and more frequent. They were greeted with aloha; Deaf locals adapted their signing to accommodate the visitors and enjoyed learning new signs from them.[99] In fact, local Deaf people *had* to learn ASL in order to communicate with all the newcomers and the younger generations. Adults' signing became mixed HSL/ASL. For some, such as Betty, HSL mixed with ASL was less desirable than HSL alone.[100] Rather than use a mixed SL, Betty changed her signing almost completely to ASL,[101] as did many others.

All of Edwin's peers are gone now. The cohorts that followed them learned Hawai'i Sign Language as children but had gradually shifted to ASL or mixed signs during the 1950s and thereafter.



This group knew Edwin and used the old sign language but most of them eventually learned American Sign Language or mixed their signs. Only Riyuji Takenaka is still alive (2019). Photo circa mid 1940s courtesy of Riyuji Takenaka.

Children at the Deaf school also mixed signs from both languages, with ASL becoming more dominant with each successive cohort. Our most shocking discovery was that some of our elderly signers were themselves shocked to learn-- for the first time-- that the signs they had learned as children were from two different languages. In the 1940s they had simply picked up signs from various people (some ASL, some HSL) and put them together. Because of Americans working at the Deaf school, mixing of HSL and ASL had been ongoing since 1939, and was rapid after Hershel's arrival.[102]



In the 1940s, children did not know they were learning signs from two distinct sign languages. Photo circa 1948 courtesy of Diamond Head School Alumni.

Throughout the 1950s, ASL was the unofficial sign language used in the school; in 1960, it became official under Principal Uchiyama. (He was the first principal from Hawai‘i: all previous principals had been hired from the Mainland[103]). All during that time, Hershel modeled ASL, used it for teaching, and “corrected” students’ HSL signs to ASL.[104] Thus, within twenty years, the mother sign language of Hawai‘i Deaf children was changed from HSL to ASL. Old signs could still be seen among elders in the community, but were hardly comprehensible to young people; it was viewed as a generational language difference.[105]

Deaf students pledging allegiance to the US flag after statehood in 1959. Photo courtesy of Diamond Head School Alumni.

William Sugiyama was the first Deaf student from Hawai‘i to attend and graduate from Gallaudet College (BA 1959). Probably to be more prepared in ASL, he attended the American School for the Deaf prior to Gallaudet.[106] By about 1960, Diamond Head School graduates’ ASL was almost comparable to their counterparts on the Mainland, making college more accessible. Jim Souza entered Gallaudet in 1961[107] and graduated about 1965. Wanda Goeas (Andrew) went to Gallaudet in 1963 for one year; she laughed about how classmates teased her for using occasional Hawai‘i signs they thought were funny.[108] Linda Yuen (Lambrecht) also went to Galluadet in 1963, and stayed one year (prep year).[109]

Increasingly, deaf or hard of hearing students didn’t go to the Deaf school but attended hearing high schools and didn’t learn to sign until they went to Gallaudet. Marjorie Parks was an early Gallaudet graduate; she was deaf but attended a hearing high school.[110] All students who studied at Gallaudet would solidify the ASL trend upon their return to Hawai‘i. Some would become ASL teachers and/or occupy leadership positions in the Hawai‘i Deaf community.

By 1960, Diamond Head School graduates' ASL was suitable for attending Gallaudet College. Photo courtesy of Diamond Head School Alumni.

Hawai'i Deaf people had a complicated language environment. Around 1985, Hellman hypothesized a large degree of language flexibility among them, such that several language continua had to be negotiated: between 1) HSL and ASL; 2) HSL and HCE (Hawai'i Creole English known as Pidgin); and 3) HSL-ASL and Standard American English, depending on the context. He noted "a rich variety of borrowings from HSL still in active use" and "HSL is probably dying."[111]

It is difficult to say when HSL actually died, but Hellman's report provides some time frame. He described his encounter with "one of the strongest and most fluent" old signers of that time, "Charlie." Hellman was a professional ASL interpreter and had some linguistic background. He observed that Charlie, an elderly Asian man, signed his story in a way that was "not totally unintelligible," but that Hellman was "overwhelmed by what (he could) only interpret as meaningless gesture."[112] Judging from Hellman's description, Charlie signed unmixed or nearly unmixed HSL. But in the same article, Hellman referred to HSL in the past tense: "It is probable that the shift among the local…Deaf from "pure" HSL to "standard" ASL *was* gradual and that there *was* a slow "de-creolization" of HSL into ASL"[113] (emphasis added). The past tense as used in 1985 seems to indicate the end of HSL in the not-too-distant future.

Hellman's "Charlie" was most likely Charles Tanaka, born in 1919,[114] (early name Takao Tanaka--see photo of swimmers above) who indeed had marvelous HSL in the 1980s, but by the time of his death in 1997, signed mixed HSL/ASL. Other old timers whose HSL stayed strong were Fa Liu and Shirley Liu who passed on about 1985, and John Kaonohilani who passed on about 1991.[115] There were probably

others from the group photos above, who held onto their HSL for a long time, but very, very few who could manage to keep it unmixed for so many decades. Takushio Kina, born 1914[116] (less than a year after Edwin—also in photo of swimmers), was video-recorded in 1999; his signing was old but included ASL fingerspelling.[117]

In 1996, Ethnologue listed HSL as "nearly extinct."[118] Video recordings in 1999 show that all elders (except perhaps Kina?) used mixed HSL/ASL or ASL, even though their first language had been HSL.[119] By the year 2000, HSL was very likely dead.[120] When the 2012 research was conducted, there were still some obvious vestiges of HSL to be seen in some elders' signing,[121] though heavily mixed with ASL. Elders said that some HSL signs and ASL signs were "the same," such as for "green," "blue," and "yellow." In 2016, the "HSL" we were seeing was (belatedly) named HSL Creole.[122] By 2019 many elderly signers from 2012 had passed on. Still, occasional HSL signs may be seen today. Some locals refer to these remnants of the language as "HSL" but that is an exaggeration. HSL would not be intelligible to ASL signers. What remains is more an accent.

Though no longer intact,[123] Hawai'i Sign Language has been documented by Professor James Woodward working with a local Deaf woman, Linda Lambrecht, at the Department of Linguistics, University of Hawai'i. There are no unmixed HSL signers still alive to be consultants on HSL. But Lambrecht (born 1945) is exceptional for her age group. She entered school when ASL was already established, but remembered old signs used by her Deaf older brothers. Years ago, while working as an ASL instructor, she took an interest in learning old signs from her elders. She visited them, interviewed them, and went over lists of HSL vocabulary with them (though they could not converse solely in HSL). She worked for years trying to save HSL. But unlike her elders, the way Linda learned HSL enabled her to keep it separate from ASL. She thus provides a record of HSL that Woodward filmed for documentation.

With only HSL Creole signers left to learn from (and with the HSL portion of the Creole increasingly weak), it would require a very dedicated Deaf community indeed to bring HSL back to life. However, in an attempt to hold onto HSL, some ASL signers in Hawai'i are adopting HSL signs in a reverse process of mixing the two sign languages. In this way, at least some old signs will live on.

Edwin Inn Significance

Edwin's story is a mere snapshot in the long history of Deaf people in Hawai'i. There is so much more to be discovered—from the Hawaiian period before the arrival of the immigrants; and from the immigrant period before the arrival of the Americans. Hopefully this paper will stimulate more research.

The Deaf community in Edwin's time was nearly all immigrants, descendants of immigrants, or Hawaiian/part Hawaiian. Life was challenging for these groups working hard to surmount social obstacles. Being Deaf added another dimension.

They had survived a school that punished sign language and had an oppressive oral philosophy. Father Mac's Deaf club gave them a safe space to socialize and sign.

As President of the Club, Edwin organized and inspired those local Deaf people for years. They were people of the islands, and the language they used expressed their world, their life in Hawai'i at that time. Their sign language contained old indigenous signs and signs that grew out of the immigrant experience in plantation camps and towns. It was organic to the islands and the people who used it. HSL contained the spirit of Hawai'i, of Hawaiian Deaf people and the spirit of all the immigrants.[124] HSL was also a lot more fun than ASL.[125]

The people, places, and events of Edwin's life could best be expressed using their own language. But Edwin lived on the cusp of old and new. He wanted the best for his community and that meant keeping their own Hawai'i Sign Language but also looking forward by learning to fingerspell. Thus the Hawai'i Deaf community reached its peak as a local group before being forever changed by powerful American influences and, eventually, American statehood.

Edwin's story is also about the dying process of a language. Gradually, HSL signers all passed away and were not replaced. Hawai'i changed. HSL no longer expressed their world. HSL was seen as old-fashioned, inferior. ASL represented a new and better identity--American. The rise and fall of HSL paralleled Edwin's own life.

While Edwin Inn is almost synonymous with HSL, he should also be remembered for the fascinating and complex person he was. He was incredibly talented. He excelled at so many things. He loved family, had many friends, and importantly, he had Deaf pride at a time when it was sorely needed. He was respected, even loved, by his community. Moreover, Edwin was an artist who painted images of his homeland, leaving behind many objects of beauty. The following are a few paintings that show the breadth of his skill. He strove for perfection in everything he did. Edwin Inn was a role model in every way.

Selected Art Work of Edwin Inn

"E Hu kilau Hawaiiana"

"Diamond Head"

"Volcanic Home
of Madame Pele"

"Ke Ahi O' Pele

"Seascape at Night"

Acknowledgements

Kimiyo Yoshino Nakamiyo helped identify people in the group photos.

Patty Sakal was a key informant with personal experience of Hawai'i Deaf history and a lifetime of observation of old signers. She also facilitated the research by interpreting on numerous occasions.

The Inn family graciously loaned Edwin's artwork to be reproduced and shared.

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[1] This paper uses Deaf with a capital "D" to refer to people who lack audition, use sign language, and are part of a community of sign language users. The term "deaf" refers to people who lack audition but do not use sign language and are not part of a sign language community. Capital "D" connotes a cultural identification.
[2] http://www.hawaiihistory.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=ig.page&year=1850
[3] Margaret L. Catton, *Social Service in Hawaii*. (Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Books 1959) 288. The predominance of immigrants was due to both 1) immigration; and 2) decline in the Hawaiian population due to diseases against which they had no immunity.
[4] Signs used by a Hawaiian Deaf man in 1821 were described by the leader of the first group of missionaries to Hawai'i, Reverend Hiram Bingham, in a letter to Reverend Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet dated February 23, 1821.
[5] Professor Woodward shared this insight in the course of the research, based on his extensive work on endangered sign languages.
[6] Betty Tatsuta, discussion with author, June 30, 2014 told how Japanese (including Okinawan) Deaf people immigrated with their hearing families.
[7] This language was previously known and listed by Ethnologue as Hawai'i Pidgin Sign Language, based on the use of that name in local newspapers. It was also called Hawaiian Sign Language, but in Hawai'i, the term "Hawaiian" refers only to indigenous Hawaiian people or culture. Hawai'i Sign Language was used by people of all ethnicities; it is the geographic location, not an ethnic identity, that best characterizes the language. (From ISO 639-3 Registration Authority Request for Code Change, 8-19-13 by Albert Bickford).
[8] Videotaped interviews can be found in two collections in the Kaipuleohone archive at University of Hawai'i. See https://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu and search Department of Linguistics for the collections "Signers of Hawai'i" and "Hawai'i Deaf History and Current Documentation."
[9] Danny Inn email, Nov. 15, 2012 and photo from Lilian Kaaihue identifying Edna.
[10] Interview with Lilian Kaaihue, April 3, 2013.
[11] Founded in 1914 and originally called "The School for Defectives," the name was changed to Diamond Head School for the Deaf and Blind in 1949. http://hsdb.k12.hi.us/about-hsdb/hsdb-history/
[12] "Some Deaf, Some Blind, All Swimmers." *Honolulu Advertiser*, March 10, 1928, 5.
[13] Interview with Lilian Kaaihue, April 3, 2013.
[14] Betty Tatsuta, personal communication, Oct. 23, 2014. She also explained that her husband's family changed their name from Ryoda to Tatsuta because Ryoda had a negative meaning in Japanese. She changed her own name from Hideko to Betty in the 1950s, and also adopted an ASL sign name "B" tapping the right side of her chin.
[15] Dept. of Public Instruction. Territory of Hawaii. Biennial Report. Biennium ending Dec. 31, 1930, no page number.
[16] Dept. of Public Instruction. Territory of Hawaii. Biennial Report. Biennium ending Dec. 31, 1924, 72.
[17] Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population—Hawaii. County Honolulu. Election District Honolulu. Enumeration District 2-6. Sheet No. 33-A.
[18] Waikiki Waves. June, 1939, 7.
[19] He Helps the Deaf: Priest Leads Deaf Persons in Silent Sunday Gabfests. *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, August 11, 1939, 1.
[20] Called "Waikiki Waves," entries were made by the Sisters and included notes on events that took place at their convent in Waikīkī (opposite the Royal Hawaiian Hotel), and at St. Augustine's Church, located on Kalakaua Ave. near the convent. Source: Maryknoll Mission Archives, 55 Ryder Rd, Ossining, New York 10545

[21] Waikiki Waves. Honolulu, October 2, 1939.
[22] "Fingers Busy at Meetings of Deaf Club." *Honolulu Star Bulletin,* May 8 1940, 1.
[23] Paper "Information Gathered from Interview with Sister Gregory, Aug. 20, 1941." Source: Maryknoll Mission archives.
[24] The Club later became the Hawai'i Club for the Deaf and met for many years at the American Legion Club next to Ala Wai canal.
[25] Waikiki Waves, October 5, 1939.
[26] Waikiki Waves, Oct. 2, 1939.
[27] Waikiki Waves, Aug. 18, 1940.
[28] http://www.olelo.hawaii.edu/olelo/uaikeanei.php
[29] Patty Sakal, interview, August 12, 2012.
[30] Patty Sakal theorized that (hearing) parents in the plantation camps used Hawaiian words to create home signs for their Deaf children, resulting in similarities between spoken Pidgin and the Hawai'i signs (email, Patty Sakal, July 24, 2012).
[31] Contact Professor James Woodward at the Department of Linguistics, University of Hawai'i.
[32] Betty Tatsuta, personal communication, June 30, 2014.
[33] Danny Inn, email April 2, 2013.
[34] Waikiki Waves, Oct. 29, 1939, 5.
[35] Betty Tatsuta, personal communication, Dec. 2, 2014. There was a misconception that a two-handed alphabet similar to the BSL alphabet was used in Hawai'i in the past, before the ASL alphabet. But Betty said her age group learned the two-handed from a Boy Scout book starting in 1940 (with the exception of William Silva who learned it earlier). The two-handed alphabet was for fun; the ASL alphabet was for communication (notes Nov. 29, 2014); see movie "2-handed alphabet not part of HSL" in the archive).
[36] Betty Tatsuta, personal communication, June 30, 2014. There was gradual adoption of ASL among the adult community and it really took hold by the 1950's.
[37] Elders I knew or interviewed always used fingerspelling in some way. They seemed to want to show they could fingerspell (during 2012-2016).
[38] Personal communication, Norman Galapin Oct. 6, 2013.
[39] Undated news article on 49th State Athletic Association visit to California; picture included John. Also photo of John in boxing gear dated June 12, 1938, source unknown.
[40] Alden and Laura Ravn regularly attended the Deaf Club (Waikiki Waves, Nov. 30, 1941). Mr. Palmer met the Deaf Club (Waikiki Waves, April 21, 1940).
[41] Personal communication, Betty Tatsuta, Dec. 2, 2014. Two children of Deaf Club members (Danny Inn email Jan.15, 2016 and William Silva's Deaf son, Edmund K. Silva of Moloka'i (text message Jan. 11, 2016) confirmed that their fathers used initialized ASL signs for these colors: "g" for green; "b" for blue; "y" for yellow, all shaken. Additionally, all of the subsequent cohort who learned to sign from the Deaf Club members used the ASL signs. Norman Galapin knew a sign for yellow (thumb under nostril to reveal snot) and a few others also knew this sign, but it was more a joke than a real sign.
[42] ex: Miss Ruby Abrams graduated at the head of the art class at Cooper Institute, New York. source: *Evening Bulletin*, Honolulu, T. H. Wednesday, Dec. 23, 1908, 6.
[43] ex: Stowaway in Come Back Club. *Hawaiian Star*, Honolulu, Hawaii, Friday July 7, 1911, 1.
[44] ex: Miss Julia Smith, a Deaf woman, was a passenger on the steamship *Zealandia* from San Francisco (Source: Personal Mention. *Hawaiian Gazette*. Honolulu, Tuesday, July 9, 1898, 1).
[45] ex: Mr. Rollin Wells, a "deaf mute" from the United States, arrived on the *Moses* Taylor; he was a peddler of corn plaster and "deaf mute" alphabet cards. (Source: Notes of the Week. *The Pacific commercial advertiser*, February 22, 1873, 3).

[46] Professor Amasa Pratt led the demonstration. Source: *The Pacific commercial advertiser*, June 23, 1883, Page 2, Image 2). Professor Pratt later became Director of the Ohio School for the Deaf (*The Pacific commercial advertiser*, July 7, 1883, 5).
[47] School for Deaf Mute Children, *Sunday Bulletin*, Honolulu H.I. Sunday May 4, 1902, 8.
[48] Waikiki Waves, Oct. 3, 1939.
[49] Personal communication, Kimiyo Nakamiyo, Nov. 10, 2013.
[50] Source: Mission papers that listed enrollment of the adult Deaf Club at 28 for the year 1942-43. Maryknoll Mission archives.
[51] Norman Galapin, interview Aug. 31, 2012.
[52] Waikiki Waves, Oct. 20, 1939 reported that Mr. Palmer supported the use of signs. Norman Galapin recalled learning signs from Mr. Palmer and was upset that Palmer was fired for signing (interview Aug. 31, 2012).
[53] According to an informant in Hellman's 1985 paper, "Mr. Palmer... was shocked we did not use sign language very much. Even though sign language was forbidden... Mr. Palmer taught us signs... He taught us many new signs." Source: Hellman, E. (circa 1985) *The Question of Hawaiian Sign Language: Pidgin, Creole or Dialect?* Unpublished paper. p. 4.
[54] Videotaped interview with Alden Ravn, 1995, by Wendy Carrington.
[55] Obituary. Alden Ravn, September 10, 2009, Williamson Funeral Home, Jacksonville, Ill. http://www.airsman-hires.com/obituaries/viewobit.php?oid=3447
[56] Edwin Inn's letter to Sister Gregory, Oct. 3, 1939.
[57] Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population--Hawaii. County Honolulu. City Honolulu. Enumeration District 2-120. Sheet No. 15-A.
[58] Danny Inn email, Nov. 29, 2012.
[59] Danny Inn email, Nov. 15, 2012.
[60] Danny Inn email, Nov. 15, 2012.
[61] Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population--Hawaii. County Honolulu. City Honolulu. Enumeration District 2-120. Sheet No. 15-A.
[62] Danny Inn email, Nov. 11, 2012.
[63] Palmer, Sam D. Hopeful Futures for the Handicapped. *Paradise of the Pacific*, March 1944, 25. These same jobs were reported by our interviewees. As tourism expanded, wood carving became a more common job for Deaf men.
[64] Danny Inn email, Nov. 11, 2012.
[65] Danny Inn email, Nov. 7, 2012.
[66] Danny Inn email, Nov. 7, 2012.
[67] See movie about Father Mac's Deaf Club in the archive. All members' sign names are shown there.
[68] Danny Inn email, Nov. 22, 2012.
[69] Doreen Morgado identified him in a videophone conversation, Aug. 29, 2016.
[70] Paul Tomiyasu, personal communication, Feb. 2, 2020.
[71] Danny Inn email, Nov. 9, 2012.
[72] Danny Inn email, Nov. 27, 2012.
[73] Danny Inn email, Nov. 28, 2012.
[74] For involvement of the NAD, see Nishikawa, Toshio (1954). A Descriptive Study of the Hearing Handicapped in the Territory of Hawaii. A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Hawaii in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts. August, 1954, 61.
[75] Danny Inn email, Nov. 11, 2012.
[76] Danny Inn, personal communication, July 19, 2014.
[77] Danny Inn email, Nov. 6, 2012.

[78] Danny Inn demonstrated the sign July 19, 2014. Riyuji Takenaka used it during interview July 24, 2016.
[79] Danny Inn email, Nov. 27, 2012.
[80] Danny Inn email, Nov. 29, 2012.
[81] Danny Inn email, Nov. 8, 2012.
[82] Danny Inn email, Nov. 22, 2012.
[83] Waikiki Waves, Oct. 5, 1939.
[84] Edwin said the Catholic Church did not want him to be a union carpenter; Danny could not understand why. Danny himself joined the plumbers union and retired as a union plumber (Danny Inn email, Nov. 22, 2012). Edwin's feeling about unions might have been linked to the violence that had suppressed plantation strikers since 1850. "No union had been successful in obtaining so much as a toe-hold in any plantation of the Territory until 1939." The 1946 sugar strike was instrumental in finally ending Hawai'i's paternalistic labor relations and ushering in a new era of participatory democracy both on the plantations and throughout Hawai'i's political and social institutions. (https://www.hawaii.edu/uhwo/clear/home/HawaiiLaborHistory.html)
[85] Danny Inn email, Nov. 7, 2012.
[86] Danny Inn email, Nov. 29, 2012.
[87] Suichi Honda, interview Aug. 13, 2012.
[88] Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population—Hawaii. County Honolulu. Election District Honolulu. Enumeration District 2-6. Sheet No. 33-A.
[89] Danny Inn email, March 17, 2013.
[90] Danny Inn email, Nov. 29, 2012.
[91] Danny Inn email, Nov. 6, 2012.
[92] Danny Inn email, Nov. 13, 2012.
[93] Danny Inn email, Nov. 8, 2012.
[94] Danny Inn email, Nov. 13, 2012.
[95] Danny Inn email, Dec. 2, 2012.
[96] Edwin's grave is located at the Hawaiian Memorial Park in Kaneohe (Danny Inn, text message Jan. 4, 2020).
[97] See Documentary movie of May Day 1952 by Suichi Honda in the archive.
[98] Betty Tatsuta, July 2, 2014.
[99] Kimiyo Nakamiyo, July 18, 2016 and Wanda G. Andrew, June 16, 2015.
[100] Betty Tatsuta, June 30, 2014.
[101] See 1999 and 2012 interviews with Betty Tatsuta held in Kaipuleohone Archive, University of Hawai'i-Mānoa.
[102] The nuns, Mr. Palmer, and the Ravns contributed to the mixing, but the biggest influence was Hershel Mouton who signed beautiful ASL (personal communication, Wanda Andrew, June 16, 2015).
[103] Jim Souza, interview August 18, 2012. The policy was "Total Communication" that used both ASL and English, sometimes simultaneously, but Deaf teachers signed ASL.
[104] Roselyn Engleman, personal communication, June 16, 2016.
[105] Judy Kobayashi Martin interview, Aug. 18, 2012.
[106] https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?pid=164737952
[107] Jim Souza, interview August 18, 2012.
[108] Wanda Andrew, personal communication, Jan.10, 2020.
[109] In 2012 when author first worked with Linda, she lamented that in the 1960s women did not study academic subjects such as Linguistics, but were expected to get married and have

children, which she did. Paul Tomiyasu confirmed Linda stayed just one year at Gallaudet (personal communication, Jan. 13, 2020).

[110] Paul Tomiyasu, personal communication, Jan.11, 2020.

[111] Hellman, E. (circa 1985). op. cit., 8.

[112] Hellman, E. (circa 1985). op. cit., 1.

[113] Hellman, E. (circa 1985). op. cit., 8.

[114] Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population—Hawaii. County Honolulu. Election District Honolulu. Enumeration District 2-6. Sheet No. 33-A.

[115] Paul Tomiyasu, personal communication, Feb. 2, 2020.

[116] Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930. Population—Hawaii. County Honolulu. Election District Honolulu. Enumeration District 2-6. Sheet No. 33-A.

[117] Contact Linda Lambrecht for the entire interview.

[118] Ethnologue 13th edition (1996).

[119] Movies were made by Sharon Carter with Linda Lambrecht. Lambrecht has the complete interviews, but excerpts can be seen in the archive collection "Hawai'i Deaf History and Current Documentation."

[120] This is author's best estimation according to the evidence, corroborated by local elder Paul Tomiyasu who observed the history as it happened (personal communication Feb. 2, 2020).

[121] See especially Ryoichi Narikawa, Wallace "Masa" Hamada, and Eugene Rodrigues in the 2012 collection. Ryoichi and Masa were also filmed in 1999. Suichi Honda and Mildred Morikawa were other old-timers we interviewed in 2012 but their signing was strongly ASL. All these folks were born in the 1920s.

[122] Clark, Brenda; Samantha Rarrick; Bradley Rentz; Claire Stabile; James Woodward; Sarah Uno (2016). "Uncovering Creole Hawai'i Sign Language: Evidence from a case study". *Theoretical Issues in Sign Language Research (TISLR) 12.*

[123] There is no hidden Deaf group that has continued using HSL in isolation since 1939. Riyuji Takenaka (born 1927) is one of the best examples still alive; his SL is mixed. He can remember many old signs but doesn't use them all the time. He cannot sign in a way that uses only HSL. No one can.

[124] Thanks to Jim Souza for this thought (from interview August 18, 2012).

[125] Paul Tomiyasu, personal communication, Feb. 2, 2020.